



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

DATE: May 19, 1981

SUBJECT: Cleanup Progress Report: Midwest Refinery Sites - Total Petroleum Inc., Alma, Michigan

FROM: Ross Powers, OHMC

THRU: A.R. Winkelhofer, Director, EDO

MID 005 358/30

TO: Greg Vanderlaan, Chief, OSF, Superfund

On May 5, 1981, I met with Mr. Patrick Lincoln, Director of Environmental Affairs and Mr. Bernie Shaver, Environmental Chemist for Total Petroleum Inc., and together with Mr. Larry Elmleaf from MDNR Environmental Enforcement Division, discussed the cleanup of this site.

The problems at this site, consisted of: several barrels (about 15) of heavy oily material; "burn tank" residues; along with several patches of tank bottoms from past refinery operations, were left on the site. Fencing was incomplete and a pond at the site was found to contain 29 ug/l of phenols. Phenols were a problem at the refinery when it was in operation. All of the buildings and tanks have since been removed and the site is inactive.

Since my last inspection, Total Petroleum has looked into past disposal practices and viewed aerial photos of the site. Areas where oily material is now found, were areas where tank bottoms were evidently deposited. The site security was improved by repairing the fences. No material has been removed.

Sampling of this area by Total, found very low levels of phenol and cyanides in the water in and around the site. The highest value found was in a pond on site, that contained an apparently healthy population of aquatic life. The drums of oily residue were analyzed for total metals, and found 32 ppm of chrome and 30 ppm of lead. They are not considered to be a threat to the environment by Mr. Lincoln. The tank bottoms contained between 230 and 1900 ppm of lead and are showing signs of biodegradation. Small areas of what appears to be carbon and reactor rings were apparently dumped along with building debris in low areas on the site. They do not appear to be causing any problems. EPA analysis did not find any significant levels of organics.

Total Petroleum plans to remove and land farm the 55 gallon drums of oily sludge and the oily tank bottoms in the nearby Total Petroleum Refinery disposal site. This site has received three types of materials in the past. All other solids would remain on site. The removal and land farming would begin this week for the barrels and the tank bottoms will be disposed of by the end of the summer. The groundwater at this site may be sampled by the MDNR at some future date, but Total does not intend to conduct any further tests.

Recommendations

I concur with these plans and encouraged Total to expedite the suggested disposal. Once these apparent pollutants are removed, the site should be comparatively innocuous and Region V EES need not monitor further.

cc: Larry Elmleaf, MDNR, Environmental Enforcement
P. Lincoln, Total Petroleum, Inc.

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